



There is No Cure for HIV, but the Infection Can Be Prevented

The headline above summarizes the theme of Michael Butler's 2001 HIV/AIDS Awareness Rally speech, delivered at the Indiana Statehouse on April 24, 2001. Butler is director of the ISDH HIV/STD Division. His speech, in its entirety, follows.



MICHAEL BUTLER

Photo by Daniel Axler

of the rest of us think "that's not my problem, it's theirs." But HIV poses a threat to us all. And the funerals are still being held.

Good afternoon.

I am Michael Butler, Director of the Division of HIV/STD for the Indiana State Department of Health. We are here today because of the severe impact that HIV is having on African Americans and Hispanics in Indiana, and specifically in Indianapolis. While it is important to note how far we have come, it is much more important to note how far we have to go. AIDS has taken the lives of 408 non-white male residents of Indianapolis since 1981. That is almost one third of all males who have died from AIDS in Indianapolis.

So, what makes this number special? African Americans and Hispanics are becoming HIV positive at a much faster rate than any other race in Indiana. And HIV is totally preventable. The messages are out there. But they are not being heard—or *they are being ignored*. We need to educate our communities and ourselves because HIV is 100% preventable. We need to learn about our risk factors for HIV infection, and learn how to reduce our risk. We need to share that knowledge. There is no cure for HIV.

There have been 1,491 funerals for residents of Indianapolis who died of AIDS-related conditions since 1981. Four hundred forty-four of these were for African Americans. Twenty-one of them were for Hispanics. Today there are 981 African Americans living with HIV/AIDS in Indianapolis that we know of. Estimates are that at least another 198 African Americans in Indianapolis do not know they are infected. How many more funerals must we attend before the message is heard?

Minorities represent approximately 8% of the population

of Indiana and about 36% of the HIV cases. In the last 4 years there has been a 64% increase in the African American community in the number of diagnoses of HIV and AIDS in Indiana. Women are being infected at alarming rates. Statistics indicate that they are becoming infected by the men in their lives. Why is the message not heard? There is no cure for HIV. HIV is preventable.

We must take additional steps to increase awareness about HIV. We can no longer isolate HIV disease from other social, public, and mental health issues. Co-factors known to contribute to the risk of HIV include current and past STD infections, alcohol and other drug use and abuse, teen pregnancy, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, socioeconomic factors, sexual addiction, peer pressure, cultural/ethnic barriers, religious beliefs, mental illness, geography, and homelessness. We cannot effectively respond to or treat HIV without addressing these and other concerns.

No one can do it alone. Government must continue to partner with the community, business, families, and faith organizations. We must continue working together to strengthen current efforts and to create new ones. We need to hear the voices of the people, for our success or failure depends on the community. And we need to talk about the issue. We need to inform and educate our children, spouses, and partners. It is important to know that there is no cure for HIV, but it is preventable. We need to tackle the tough issues, those sensitive topics that are whispered about, if we want to make a difference. We need to teach risk reduction and behavior change. Knowledge can be a powerful thing. It can help save a life. But knowledge alone will not prevent HIV.

There are programs in most areas of the state that help individuals identify their risk for HIV infection and learn ways to reduce that risk. Many of these programs are designed to be culturally and linguistically appropriate. Many are designed by HIV-infected individuals, or other members of the community they serve. Both the state and federal government offer training and technical assistance to organizations that desire to do prevention work.

There are wonderful medications available that help HIV-infected people live longer, healthier lives. But there is no cure. Do not be fooled by those that claim to have been cured of HIV. There is no cure. Once infected, an individual lives with HIV for the remainder of his or her life.

HIV infection is preventable. There is no cure. HIV does not discriminate. Learn your status. It is **not** who you are that puts you at risk, it is **what** you do. Learn your risks. Protect yourself and protect others. HIV is 100% preventable. Learn how to prevent becoming infected so your loved ones do not have to attend your funeral.

Office of Women's Health to Offer Free Bone Density Screenings During Osteoporosis Prevention Month

May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month, a time for Hoosier women to learn about how to prevent this condition and to find out if they're at risk.

That's why the Office of Women's Health at the Indiana State Department of Health is planning a variety of events during the month, including free bone density heel screenings in rural and urban locations around the state.

Osteoporosis is a condition in which the bones become brittle, weakened, and more likely to break. It is often called the "silent disease" because bone loss occurs without symptoms. People may not know that they have osteoporosis until their bones become so weak that a sudden strain, bump, or fall causes a fracture or a vertebra to collapse.

The estimated incidence of osteoporosis for women over the age of 65 years in Indiana in 1999 was 29.0 percent, according to the State Department of Health's Epidemiology Resource Center.

Osteoporosis is a major public health threat for more than 28 million Americans, 80 percent of whom are women. In the U.S. today, 10 million individuals already have the disease and 18 million more have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for osteoporosis, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

Nationally, hip fractures alone were responsible for more than 300,000 hospitalizations among persons 65 years of age and over in 1996, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In Indiana, osteoporosis and osteoporosis-related conditions accounted for 3,667 hospitalizations among women 45 years of age and over in 1994, the last year for which relevant data are available.

In order to identify women at risk for fractures and other complications of reduced bone mass, the Indiana Osteoporosis Prevention Initiative makes available free bone density heel screenings using an ultrasound Sahara bone densitometer. To date, over 2,000 free screenings have been performed

throughout the state. The project is funded as part of the Indiana Osteoporosis Prevention Initiative.

Here are the dates and locations of the screenings to be conducted during May:

In Indianapolis, Bart Peterson's wife, Amy, will be screened Wednesday, May 9 at a health fair for city and county employees being held all day in the lobby of the City-County Building. In partnership with the Mayor's Office, free bone density screenings will be available from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. for female city/county employees age 40 and over. In the afternoon, Amy Minick Peterson will present a proclamation to declare May Osteoporosis Month in the City of Indianapolis.

In association with Marsh Supermarkets, six locations in Indianapolis, Carmel, Zionsville, and Mooresville will host free screenings by the Office of Women's Health from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on these dates:

May 8 (Tuesday), 2140 East 116th Street (at Keystone), Carmel

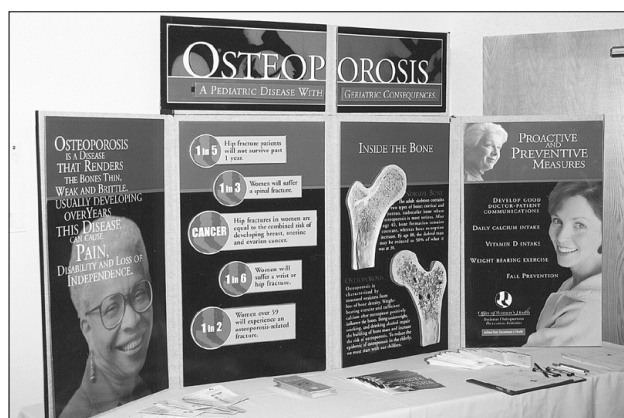
May 12 (Saturday), 6965 West 38th Street, Indianapolis

May 15 (Tuesday), 10679 North Michigan Road, Zionsville

May 19 (Saturday), 10901 East Washington Street, Indianapolis

May 22 (Tuesday), 435 Town Center Street N. (IN 67), Mooresville

May 26 (Saturday), 2350 Broad Ripple Avenue (62nd Street at Keystone), Indianapolis



PAINLESS OSTEOPOROSIS BONE DENSITY TEST (top photo) can signify potentially crippling bone loss. ISDH Women's Health Program osteoporosis exhibit and testing (center and above) were available to ISDH staff at the Public Health Week observance, April 2.

Photos by Daniel Axler

Around the state, health fairs will be held in these locations:

■ Lake County at Women's Health 2001: Winning from the Beginning, Avalon Manor, Merrillville, Friday, May 11;

■ Daviess County at the Washington Public Library, May 23, 9:00

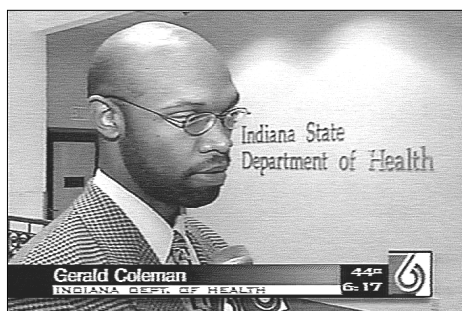
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Public Health In The News

April was a busy month for public health in Indiana. And the media coverage reflected that. From Public Health Week to the Governor's proposed tobacco tax increase, news stories about public health issues permeated the newspapers and airwaves this past month.

In all, ISDH staff dealt with 104 media calls, up from the usual 60-70 calls per month. There were 15 radio interviews on public health topics, including three for Network Indiana, which has more than 70 subscribing stations. One reason for the higher number of calls was that ISDH issued 18 news releases in April, up from the usual 5-10 releases per month.

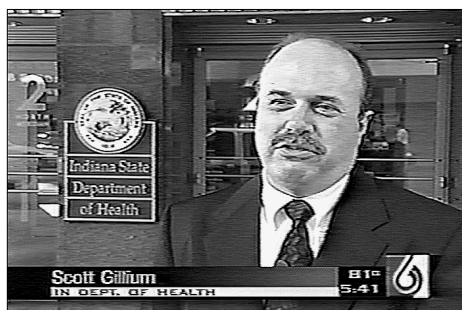
T R A C Y BOATWRIGHT, State Fire Marshal, speaks at a news conference co-sponsored by ISDH on the "Recall Round-Up" of hazardous consumer products. Four TV stations, WIBC, and Metro Network covered the event.



GERALD COLEMAN, assistant commissioner, Health Care Regulatory Services, discusses the nursing home report cards that are on the ISDH Web site in an interview with WRTV.



CHARLENE GRAVES, M.D., (above left and right) medical director for immunization, is interviewed live about National Infant Immunization Week on FOX 59 AM and the WISH-TV Sunday morning news.



SCOTT GILLIAM, manager, Food Protection, provides Easter egg safety tips for WRTV viewers.

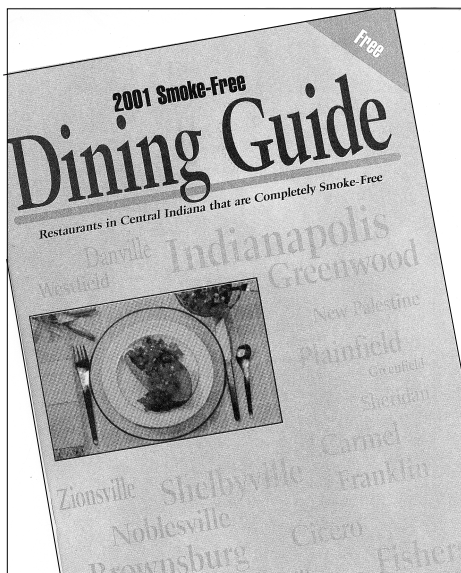


KARLA SNEEGAS, executive director, Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Executive Board, talks about the public health reasons for adopting Governor O'Bannon's 50-cent cigarette tax increase during a news conference covered by most of the State House press corps.



MIKE SINSCO, senior entomologist, Sanitary Engineering, was interviewed for a front-page story in *The Indianapolis Star* about how to avoid tick-borne diseases.

2001 Smoke-Free Restaurant Guide Is Now Available



If you like to eat out in central Indiana and are among the 75 percent of the population who are nonsmokers, the 2001 Smoke-Free Dining Guide may be just the ticket to locate restaurants where smoking is not permitted.

The guide contains listings of smoke-free restaurants in Indianapolis and the following suburban counties: Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Morgan, and Shelby.

According to the guide, 35 percent of the restaurants surveyed were totally smoke free as of the guide's March 2001 publication date. By definition of the designation, this means no subdivided dining space for smokers and nonsmokers.

The guide is produced by the central coalition of Smoke-Free Indiana, based at the Marion County Health Department, and supported by the Centers for Disease Control, the Indiana State Department of Health, and Ball State University.

To produce the guide, the Marion County Health Department surveyed more than 1,500 restaurants in Marion County. Health departments of the other counties contributed to the guide's content for their counties.

Karen O'Brien, director of Smoke-Free Indiana's central region, says the guides are available to the public at the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library and its branches.

IEHA Conference Helps Keep IDEM, ISDH, and SEMA Staffs Up-To-Date

The Indiana Environmental Health Association (IEHA) held its spring conference on April 19.

Topics discussed were more than a little technical, but that is not unexpected in an organization representing public health professionals and environmental scientists.

The purpose of the organization is to support its members in upholding and advancing public and environmental health.

Its fall and spring conferences provide an avenue for members to share findings and technical developments to help themselves keep up-to-date on a broad spectrum of public and environmental health issues.

The IEHA April 19 conference presenters included ISDH's Jim Howell, DVM, who spoke on the revised Epidemiological Reporting Rule; Pam O'Rourke, IDEM, who discussed pollution complaints involving junk yards; Joseph Bell, State Emergency Planning Agency, who addressed issues of transporting



JIM HOWELL
Presenter

radiological materials in Indiana; Greg Lake, Howard County Health Department, who discussed an installer certification program being developed by one of

IEHA's partner organizations, the Indiana Onsite Wastewater Professionals Association (IOWPA); Ms. Jackie Robbins, Indiana State Excise Police, who discussed interagency cooperation with problem food establishments; and Alan Dufour, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, who discussed E.coli water quality standards.

Among IEHA's other activities, local IEHA chapter meetings support networking, and its *Journal of Environmental Health* communicates issues pertaining to air quality, food protection, housing, hazardous substances, solid waste and other environmental issues.

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a.m.-2:00 p.m.; and

■ Marion County at the Celebration for Older Americans, State Fairgrounds, Thursday, May 3, and at Women's Health 2001: Winning from the Beginning, Westin Hotel, Indianapolis, Friday, May 18.

On Monday, May 7, Barbara Levy Tobey, Director of the Office of Women's Health, will participate in a call-in panel about osteoporosis on "HealthLink" (WIPB-TV, Muncie), 6:00-6:30 PM on Channel 49, in conjunction with screenings in and around Muncie in May and June. On May 7, screenings will be available at the station office (check with the station for exact times).

On Wednesday, May 16, the Office of Women's Health will be providing free bone density heel screenings at the Indianapolis Employee Health and Fitness Day events at the Monument Circle from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. This health and fitness fair is the largest in Indianapolis, and this will be

the ninth year that the National Institute for Fitness and Sport (NIFS) has partnered with the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports to present this event to the citizens of Indianapolis. The Office of Women's Health will be one of approximately 30 exhibitors representing a variety of health and wellness organizations.



Indiana State
Department of Health

Express

The *Indiana State Department of Health Express* is a bi-weekly publication for ISDH employees and stakeholders. To submit news items, call (317) 233-7336 or send information to: ISDH Express, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 2E, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

David W. Pilbrow, Editor
Telephone (317) 233-7336
Fax: (317) 233-7873
dpilbrow@isdh.state.in.us
<http://www.state.in.us/isdh>

Margaret Joseph, Director of Public Affairs

Gregory A. Wilson, M.D.
State Health Commissioner

Mary DePrez
Deputy State Health Commissioner



Local Health Departments Report on Public Health Week

Fanfare? Yes! Substantial health activities? Also, yes!

Both were visible in Indiana communities during National Public Health Week, April 2 - 8, and throughout the month of April.

A number of Indiana's local health departments used National Public Health Week as a springboard to promote and deliver public health services to residents in their geographic areas.

Perhaps the most important impact of these special activities was to draw public attention to the contributions that public health efforts provide Indiana localities throughout the year.

Several health departments took time out to recognize, with awards, staff and citizens from their communities who have made notable contributions to public health.

Public Health Week activities were varied and broad in scope. Media contacts were extensive and involved coverage of proclamations by supportive public officials and promotion of health fairs where health departments provided immunizations and free screenings.

The **Vigo County Health Department** continued its tradition of increasing visibility of public health through observance of annual Public Health Week activities.

Louise Anderson, director of that department's Nursing Division, reports that the Terre Haute *Tribune-Star* directed the attention of thousands of subscribers to public health issues with its photos and narrative about Public Health Week on the front



PARTICIPANTS (above) help contribute to a 60 percent attendance increase at this year's Tipton County Health Fair. Improved attendance was attributed to a scheduling change and three days of advance coverage by the local Tipton public access TV station.

page of its April 1st Sunday picture section.

On Wednesday, April 4th, the department held a luncheon program to which they invited board of health members, elected officials, and friends of public health. The two Terre Haute television stations covered the luncheon for viewing on local evening news programs.

At the luncheon, the Terre Haute Mayor's administrative assistant presented the mayor's proclamation that declared April 1st - 8th, Public

Health Week for the city and county.

Anderson says that Health Officer Wayne Crockett, M.D. was on hand to welcome everyone.

At the luncheon program, Anderson gave a brief overview of public health and encouraged guests in attendance to think of themselves as the "public" in public health.

In a Power-Point presentation, Health Educator Joni Foulkes demonstrated the range of activities of the local health department. Anderson says that department employees were also available to answer questions about their programs.

Tipton County Health Department health educator Debra Bennington reports that the department, together with health fair exhibitors, delayed this year's Public Health Week observance until April 26 because they believed that the coincidence of spring break may have limited attendance last year. In 2000, Bennington says, 45

different Health Fair exhibitors drew 125 attendees. This year, 43 exhibitors drew 200.

Advance TV coverage, Bennington says, stimulated interest. She adds, that the area's public access TV station presented a "15-minute program prior to the Health Fair, which aired every two hours for three consecutive days."

"On the program," she says, we were able to outline what booths would be there, to give the public a glance at the health issues that would

HEALTH WEEK – from reverse side

be discussed."

Neither exhibitors nor attendees were charged for participating or attending. According to Bennington, "There was only a minimum charge for some of the blood screenings."

The **St. Joseph County Health Department** conducted a three-day Public Health Week observance. On Monday, April 2nd, accompanied by South Bend Police, the Health Education Division conducted a set of Tobacco Compliance Checks of retail establishments.

Tuesday was Dr. George B. Plain recognition day; the health department held a community-wide dinner and award banquet. Mayors of both South Bend and Mishawaka declared April 3, 2001 as Dr. George B. Plain Day. Dr. Plain retired as local health officer in September at age 91.

On Wednesday, Health Department staff were available to answer questions, one-on-one, at five area supermarkets. Staff interacted with the community at each supermarket to offer blood pressure checks and provide answers to questions about health matters. Attendees could talk to an environmentalist regarding septic systems and ground water, ask health educators questions about substance abuse, tobacco education, and many other topics, and obtain contact phone numbers to call for answers to future health questions.

The **Marion County Health Department** "in cooperation with a variety of community partners sponsored programs recognizing Public Health Week," which highlighted a month of activities.

On April 3rd, the department held a "Minority Health Month Kick-Off and Health Fair" at health department offices. Health screenings and healthy snacks were provided free of charge.

On April 4, the department sponsored "Healthy People 2010: A Challenge and An Opportunity." The symposium, free and open to the public, was held at the Indiana Historical Society building to focus attention on how to achieve community health benchmarks by 2010, as set forth by the office of the Surgeon General.

On April 12th, the department

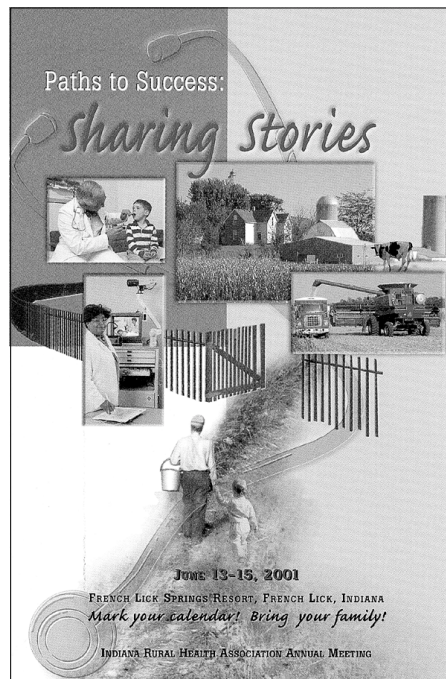
sponsored "Across the Table Discussions," providing an opportunity to exchange information on adult sickle cell anemia, pediatric sickle cell anemia, asthma, HIV/AIDS and STDs. Marion County Health Department programs addressing each topic were discussed.

The department held its annual Public Health Awards recognition dinner at the Indiana Roof Ballroom on April 18. Attendees paid \$100 per person to attend. Funds raised support MCHD's minority medical student

It's Coming June 13-15: The 4th Annual Indiana Rural Health Conference

The Indiana Rural Health Association's 2001 conference will focus on an array of topics including: the future of rural health care, health disparities impacting rural populations, telehealth and telecommunications, diseases impacting rural populations, agricultural issues impacting rural health, emergency medical services, rural health care delivery systems, and environmental health issues.

The conference is scheduled for the French Lick Springs Resort, June 13-15. For additional information e-mail: Debbie Meers (dmeers@tcon.net), or Randall Ritter (rritter@tcon.net).



PATHS TO SUCCESS: *Sharing Stories* is 4th Annual Indiana Rural Health Conference Theme.

scholarship program.

The **Delaware County Health Department** got its Public Health Week observance rolling with publication of an article by Health Department Administrator Robert Jones in the Muncie *Star-Press* on April 2nd. The article focused on health education as a key component of public health.

Lori Gibson, R.N. says that observances continued with the department providing glucose and cholesterol testing, taking blood pressure readings, and offering pneumonia shots at two different sites.

On Tuesday, April 3rd, these services were available at the Ross Community Center and on Friday, April 6th, at the Muncie Mall.

The department's health educators prepared health education displays on diabetes and obesity, which were observed both by people who passed by and by those who waited to be served. People who participated in a "pound for pound jeopardy quiz" received a stress ball shaped like an apple. Other giveaways were magnets imprinted with the food pyramid guide.

On April 23, the **Johnson County Health Department** held a health fair for county employees offering: information on cancer, smoking, nutrition, stress, immunizations, obesity and exercise; screenings for hemoglobin, tetanus and diphtheria; a hand-washing demonstration; and a computerized life span estimate based on the practice of healthy behaviors or their absence.

Indiana State Department of Health **NewsLink**

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David W. Pilbrow, Editor
Telephone (317) 233-7336
Fax: (317) 233-7873
dpilbrow@isdh.state.in.us
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